College of Marin, Multimedia Studies
Industry Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2016

In attendance:

Ryan Bond, Independent Game Producer
Julian Hoover, Owner of Bright House
Grant Rogers, Producer at Disruptive Games
Bobbi Wilson, Print Worldwide Marketing at HP Inc.
Derek Wilson, Instructor, College of Marin
James Gonzales, Instructor, College of Marin
Beth Pratt, Dean of CTE and Workforce, College of Marin
Byron Ramey, Counseling, College of Marin
Marc Woerlein, Workforce, College of Marin

8:05AM – Derek and James opened the meeting and introduced the agenda, lead the group through introductions.

8:10AM – Discussion of Industry needs and recommendations for internships and entry-level workers.

Ryan Bond began the discussion by stating that a successful internship should begin with clear expectations for both the intern and employer regarding learning objectives and legal requirements. The group expressed that having a defined scope of work and maintaining the spirit of a learning environment in the workplace would be optimal for intern development, noting that interns often have very different experiences based on the size and organization of the employer they work with.

The group identified a skill development opportunity with interns, based on their experiences, of written and oral communication. The group supported efforts to orient interns as to how important quality presentation through email, resume, and interview is in realizing opportunities and later in collaborating with coworkers. Bobbi Wilson affirmed the importance of this skill in allowing interns and employees to stay "on strategy" with collaborative projects and ensure a good execution. The group discussed the need for students to understand that they will receive criticism and to process that communication constructively. Dean Pratt elaborated on the role of Lissette Flores, Career Intern & Services Program Coordinator, and how students are prepared for internships currently at College of Marin.

Julian Hoover and Grant Rogers introduced to the group the importance of portfolio development at this time to help make a student more attractive as a potential intern or employee. Derek Wilson described the portfolio development course at College of Marin. Julian Hoover described that he did not complete an internship while a student at College of Marin but was able to develop a strong portfolio which enabled him to find entry level work. Julian expressed the importance of students having a grasp of marketing themselves on the internet and having a professional internet presence which allows employers to understand their abilities.

8:25AM – Recommendations for training necessary to fill employment gaps and/or enter the respective industry.

Ryan, Grant, and Julian explained that a lot of resources are put into training new hires on the use of collaborative software and systems such as GitHub, Apache Subversion, Bitbucket, and Jira. During the conversation basic costs and usability for each of these products were discussed so that they could be further considered by the department. Ryan Bond recommended starting students with Subversion for any group projects or file exchanges. Grant Rodgers added that project tracking and task tracking with Jira would be especially beneficial in a game development class. Bobbi Wilson expressed that understanding collaborative and project tracking tools would be a transferable skill that is highly attractive for many employers. Julian Hoover described the experience of a student starting out in the industry confident in their skills, however impeded by a lack confidence with collaborative tools used in the industry. The discussion shifted to the use of new technologies for sharing documents and direct messaging at this point with mention of Google Docs, Slack, Skype, and Google Hangouts as services that are becoming important in the industry. Bobbi Wilson pointed out that some organizations will focus on utilizing proprietary solutions to ensure a higher level of security instead of using Google or Dropbox for file sharing. The group discussed the pros and cons of cloud and distributed software solutions for file sharing and communication. Julian Hoover expressed that students will still encounter organizational cultures that are heavily using email as a primary tool for communication and the group discussed again the importance of quality written communication, email etiquette, and organization.

8:55AM – Final Thoughts

The advisory committee offered a final suggestion of giving students the experience of working in someone else's programming code, learning the processes of "team-proofing your work", and working on group projects that involve rotating roles so that students gain experience picking up a programming or design component that is incomplete to work on.

9:01AM – Closing

James and Derek closed the meeting and advised that they will be taking the feedback to the department for further consideration. They let the advisory committee members know that the next meeting will be in Spring 2017 with the date and time to be determined. Dean Pratt advised that contact information for the College of Marin Career Internships and Service Learning Coordinator Lisette Flores would be included with the minutes. Lisette can be reached via email at lmflores@marin.edu or via phone at (415) 485-9670.